



# SAMJ FORUM

## IN MEMORIAM

### Alan Murray Glen

It is with deep sadness that we relate the death of Alan Murray Glen in Pretoria on 27 June 2005.

Alan was born in Pretoria on 15 August 1917, the second son of Mr and Mrs A R Glen, who were prominent in business in the city. After matriculating at Potchefstroom Boys High School, he chose medical training, unlike his brother Ross who entered the family business. He graduated MB ChB at Edinburgh University, where his strong interest in surgery led to the early postgraduate FRCS (Edin) degree. By this time Britain was at war and after marrying an Edinburgh lass, Winnie Reid, he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps. He saw service on hospital ships in the Adriatic Sea and in North Africa and was later posted to the then Gold Coast where he gained excellent experience of tropical African diseases.

In 1947 Alan returned to Pretoria to start a surgical practice. He was immediately recognised as a highly skilled surgeon, and this, combined with his inimitable personality, resulted in a rapid growth of his practice.

During 1955 I (FAK v W) returned to Pretoria from the UK and was highly flattered when he invited me to join his practice. My acceptance was certainly one of the best decisions I ever made. Both of us were enthusiastic and really loved the work we were doing.

For nearly 30 years never a hard word was spoken by either of us. In this period Alan taught me a great deal about surgery. He was the perfect surgeon with his diagnostic acumen, excellent pre-operative assessment of patients, wonderfully neat operative technique, diligent postoperative care and perhaps, best of all, sound relationship with his patients and their families.

Alan was the epitome of the perfect gentleman, and his demeanour towards his colleagues, assistants, nursing and office staff and even tiresome patients was always politely pleasant. He was a man of the utmost integrity, admired by all who knew him. It is appropriate to recall his years of service to the Iscor Medical Fund. His most memorable characteristic was possibly his unfailingly good sense of humour.

A retired GP of the same period adds, 'he was the GP's choice of consultant in every sort of diagnostic dilemma for his unfailing readiness and insight at all hours and frequently redemptive advice and action'.

Most people who knew him will have some humorous anecdote to tell. The following one involves myself (FAK v W).

Some years after a gastrectomy, he developed symptoms of partial bowel obstruction for which he was treated conservatively. His condition worsened, however, and we decided to operate. That day a theatre was not immediately

available and he was brought into the operation room after 14h00. In the meanwhile Winnie waited in his ward. As we put him on the table he claimed to be feeling much better and on inspection was indeed found to be less distended and so was wheeled back to his room. With great surprise his wife enquired what had happened and Alan replied, 'No! I did not have the operation. That so and so, Frik, wanted cash!' He fortunately recovered without further surgery.

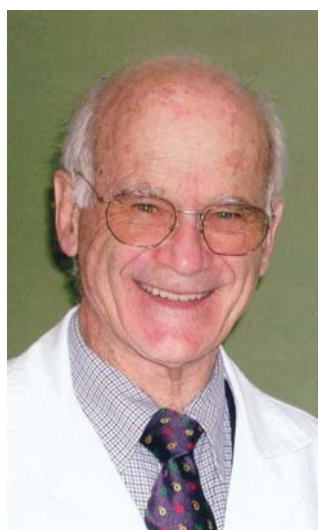
Alan was one who loved life, particularly as he saw the humorous side of every situation. He had a serious side to his personality as well, was widely read and loved music. Above all he enjoyed the outdoors of the South African veld and bush. In later years they lived on a small farm near Pretoria and took a great interest in their son Alan's farming activities and planted literally thousands of citrus trees for him.

The remaining years were marred by serial cerebral ischaemic episodes so unpleasant that death came as a merciful relief. For me (FAK v W) he will be unforgettable in that he was the mentor of my own career and an inspiration by his humanity and dignity.

He leaves two daughters, Linda and Elaine, and a son Alan, and to them and their children we extend our warmest sympathy.

**FAK van Wyk**  
**CMF Lang**

### Louis Vogelpoel



Louis Vogelpoel, a pioneer of cardiology in South Africa, died in April 2005. He had an exceptional career as a distinguished general physician, cardiologist and horticultural scientist. His commitment to patient care, teaching and personal education is remembered by his colleagues and patients. Medical students, house officers, registrars and consultants benefited from exposure to his unique blend of clinical expertise, extensive knowledge, enthusiasm and gracious style.

Louis graduated at UCT in 1945 with first-class honours. After an internship at Groote Schuur Hospital he served as a tutor in the Department of Medicine in 1947. He was awarded fellowships which allowed him to spend two years at the National Heart Hospital in London. He returned in 1953 as a part-time physician and lecturer in the Department of Medicine



and in the Cardiac Clinic at UCT and Groote Schuur Hospital. His clinical research activities resulted in the award of an MD in 1959 and many publications.

Despite a busy and successful private practice he made a major contribution to the Department of Medicine and the Cardiac Clinic by regular attendance at, and contributions to, journal clubs, ward rounds, clinical teaching and departmental meetings. His dedication and loyalty to UCT and the hospital throughout a long career set a fine example of how high-calibre private practice could be combined with ongoing academic commitment.

A gifted and an enthusiastic teacher, he was instrumental in the training of generations of undergraduate medical students by regular bedside tutorials. He went to considerable lengths to seek out patients who he believed his students should see and ensured that they understood, learned and enjoyed the finer details of history taking and examination. Postgraduate students, both registrars and junior consultants, benefited from his advice and guidance. Many who have achieved prominence nationally and internationally acknowledged his contribution to the development of their careers. Perhaps his greatest contribution was in serving as a role model. An outstanding physician and clinical cardiologist with a life-long commitment to scholarship and continuing education, he remained abreast of developments in the field without losing any of his clinical skills. He had a wonderful ability to accept criticism, to admit error on the rare occasion he was wrong and perhaps, most importantly, to analyse carefully the reason for the mistake.

Louis had two characteristics that some found trying. The first was his enthusiasm. Unusual physical signs, new science that explained well-known clinical observations or some link between medicine and his other passion, botany, would trigger discussion and argument which continued until he was satisfied the matter was settled. The second was his endless curiosity and inability to rest until he had an answer to a question he had posed. He would return repeatedly, in the most courteous manner, but with terrier-like insistence, to the original question until he got to the truth or to an answer he trusted.

Louis had another life outside of medicine. He was recognised as a horticultural scholar and researcher. His interest was mainly indigenous South African flora and he was regarded as an expert on ericas and South African orchids, particularly the *disa* genus. His studies and research on the biorhythms of the *disa* orchid species allowed the successful cultivation of these beautiful orchids in nurseries. These contributions were recorded in excellent articles and chapters in the literature on orchids. After his first publication on *disa uniflora* in 1980 more than 45 publications followed on various

aspects of orchids. He was also an expert photographer of orchids and other flowers.

His wonderful garden at his home reflected his interest, hard work and expertise and he was generous in sharing his plants with colleagues and friends. Many of us are fortunate to have plants that he gave us growing in our gardens. Even if we cannot remember the correct name we know when they flower that they are 'Louis's flowers'. What a wonderful way to be remembered!

Louis is survived by Daphne, his wife of 54 years, and four children, Peter, Lynda-Jane, David and Christopher.

**Pat Commerford**

## Frank Charles Friedlander

I want to make a brief and public farewell to my friend and colleague, Frank Friedlander.

What an education it was to have Frank as my mentor during the happy years we were in practice together! He was a fine paediatrician, a man of infinite patience, great decency, humour, charm and an embedded integrity. Frank embraced a large perspective on life and was a physician who, with his abiding intellectual interest in so many of the finer aspects of life, was truly a 'renaissance man'.

His pursuits ranged from a keen appreciation of good food and wine, music, painting and literature, to numismatics, relative to his abiding awareness of the relevance of history in life at large, and especially in medicine. Frank was a talented sportsman (sailing, golf and cricket) and a very competent bridge player. He enjoyed travel, always immersing himself in the unique aspects of each destination.

If there was a flaw it was Frank's disdain for timelines, as we can all attest, but perhaps there was a lesson in it for us in this all too hurried life!

A principle that governed his life was always to attempt to repay society for the success and fun he had enjoyed. Consequently, he was active in e.g. local South African Medical Association affairs for many years: he co-founded an annual family practitioner CME programme in Pietermaritzburg back in the 1970s – the first of its kind in the country (and still running) initiated a successful local gourmet club, and took an active part in the local and national Numismatic Society.

Those whose lives you touched will not forget your essential humanity and the rich tapestry you created. How you will be missed!

**Ken Boughton**  
Canada